

PARTNERS & SERVICES

2025
ANNUAL REPORT



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2025 BOARD OF MANAGERS



JIM HANNON

Dear friends, community members, donors, ambassadors, and partners,

At Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center (MCVSC), military members, veterans, and their families are at the heart of EVERYTHING that we do.

As we prepare to celebrate our 10th year in 2026, the MCVSC team and its partners have supported over 100,000 client visits and ultimately helped tens of thousands of veterans and their families find meaningful employment, assistance with monetary challenges, VA disability claims, mental health, food, and so much more. Your support makes milestones like this possible, and we are grateful to our partners and donors.

On the veteran homelessness front, in 2023, MCVSC stepped up and took the reins of the "Stand Down for Colorado's Homeless Veterans." In 2024, we again provided nearly 120 veterans with warm clothes, haircuts, food, counseling, and access to needed resources. Additionally, 10 of those veterans were assigned dedicated case managers and provided a place to live, with furniture, food, a peer navigator, and employment services. Amazingly, they gained employment and permanent housing and were able to "stand tall" once again. The event was so successful that MCVSC is leading it again this year, with hopes to continue to help even more veterans find permanent housing.

Each year we've expanded the breadth and availability of services to better meet the ever-growing need. Originally just in Colorado Springs, we now have offices in Westcliffe, Alamosa, Pueblo, and Trinidad, with plans to expand into other areas to ensure our services are even more available across the state. To further assist veterans, we've recently assumed Citizen Soldier Connection's mission and will strive to continue the outstanding work of David Jones and his team.

We have an incredible team of professionals - primarily veterans or military spouses - across a broad spectrum of service areas. Our team actively listens, understands, and is passionate about helping to resolve most challenges. We are made stronger by hundreds of volunteers, ambassadors and collaborative partners.

The bottom line is that the combined MCVSC team is making a tremendous difference across a broad spectrum of critical services — from suicide prevention and disability claims to legal support and employment services...and most everything else in-between!

Our commitment hasn't gone unnoticed. This year Bob McLaughlin, executive director of MCVSC, was honored by the Small Business Administration as the Colorado Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) reached its second anniversary. The VBOC is hosted at Mt. Carmel and is the only resource specializing in business resources for veterans, Reserve and National Guard members, military spouses, and their adult children. Bob also received the Spirit of the Springs award from Colorado Springs Mayor Yemi Mobolade on Flag Day for his decades of unwavering support to veterans.

While the accolades are a nice validation of Bob's impactful leadership and his phenomenal team, we couldn't help so many without the support from community leaders, individuals, corporate donors, volunteers, ambassadors, and partners like you.

Together we provide a "one-stop shop" for veterans and their families who just need a "hand up" rather than a handout.

Jim Hannon, Col., USAF (Ret.)
Chairman of the Board of Managers
Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center

YOU PROVIDE HOPE, SAVE LIVES, AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE



BOB MCLAUGHLIN

To Our Community:

As we celebrate another successful year of serving military members, veterans, and their families, I am grateful for the partners who have supported MCVSC's mission and those who served our nation.

When we developed the concept for Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, one of our most important tenants for success was strong community partners. Our founder, Jay Cimino, always encouraged me to build strong bonds with like-minded organizations, where care of our military, veterans, and their families was priority one.

It's his vision we carry on today. Thanks to Jay's leadership, we have helped thousands of veterans, and thanks to the continued commitment from Chair of the Board of Trustees Gina Cimino, we continue to thrive.

This year, we are increasing our role in supporting our military and veteran populations by growing our veteran connection program through mission assumption of the Citizen Solider Connection. I'd like to give a special thanks to David Jones, Chair of the Board of Directors, for his teamwork. We are also expanding our case management role with the Veterans Treatment Court and are assuming case management at the Freedom Springs Veterans Housing Program.

Because of the unparalleled support of our partners, we continue to grow programs and meet the needs of veterans throughout Colorado.

We're honored to work with organizations that hold our veteran and military families in such high esteem and are grateful to continue to do the work that serves those who served our nation.

And as we reach 10 years of service in 2026, we thank you, our partners, our supporters and our friends. You make our work possible. You provide hope, save lives, and make a real difference to those who served our country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert F. McLaughlin".

Robert F. McLaughlin
COL, U.S. Army (Ret.), Executive Director

Military, Veteran, & Family Services

This year, the Military, Veteran, and Family Services (MVFS) Department took on two new projects, delivered on the second year of another, and continued to build support and services for those who need a hand up throughout Colorado.

The 2024-2025 fiscal year brought its share of challenges when both Amazon and Target stopped providing donations to the food and hygiene pantry. But the division didn't let that setback slow them down. Rather, the team continues to provide assistance with food, rent, housing, and other items.

One of the new projects is the Veterans Treatment Court in partnership with the Fourth Judicial District. Instead of jail or prison, veterans involved with treatment court are assigned case managers to help deal with addiction, employment, and other issues veterans face.

"We are working with some of the more challenging cases," said Shannon Olin, director of military, veterans and family services. "The veterans who have trouble following through, who maybe need some more intense help, those are the people we are focusing on at Mt. Carmel."

The MVFS team is also taking on the case management at Freedom Springs Veteran Housing project, a 50-unit project for people facing homelessness, that offers special preferences for veterans and their families. The facilities provide onsite and offsite services including case management, transportation, meals, independent living skills, medical and mental health care, substance abuse support, and employment assistance.

Mt. Carmel is no stranger to helping people with challenging pasts. For the past two years, the nonprofit has selected homeless veterans for the Transitional Housing Initiative, a partnership with Next Chapter and UCHealth. The goal is to find jobs, permanent housing, and counseling for up to 10 veterans who qualify. After two years, only a handful have either left the state or returned to the streets.

"We spend 30 days with them and it's an intensive process," she said. "We're with them every step – helping them find jobs, training, permanent homes, food."

Olin credits the success of the programs to its vast array of partners. While Mt. Carmel has more than 500 partners, she says the groups that help provide food – like Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado — mean more families have options for meals. Food instability is a problem for junior enlisted members, as well as many veterans.

"But we also get great support from smaller businesses," she said. "Ronnie, owner of Ronnie's Automotive, is a veteran and hires veterans. But he also provides repairs for free and reaches out to get parts at a discounted rate. He also gets cars and fixes them — and we were able to provide cars to some veterans who needed them."

The Colorado Motorcycle Veterans Association and the American Veteran Motorcycle Group also provide furniture donations for clients, she said. But every partner provides support that keep the programs running smoothly.

"We're very grateful for support," Olin said. "And our needs are growing."



724

New client in-takes

\$242,700

Financial assistance provided

1,437

Families helped with holiday programs

3,045

Family members served by food pantries

24

Food distro events on Colorado Springs campus

The big wish for 2026: More support to continue to help people.

"We need support for the food pantry and for the hygiene closet," she said. "With grant funding tightening up, and some of our major donors canceling their support, it's tight. We rely on our donor base to fill that need. We're grateful for what they do for us — and for other people."



608 Placements
\$35.11 Salary average
4 Mt. Carmel job fairs
An average of 153 employers and job seekers at each quarterly event.
6 Mt. Carmel networking events
An average of 30 attendees at each event.

Outreach Events:
84 TAP classes at Fort Carson
Approximately 2,520 servicemembers and spouses briefed.
12 TAP classes at USAFA
240 servicemembers and spouses briefed.
24 Pre-separation panels at Peterson SFB
360 servicemembers and spouses briefed.
12 TAP classes at Schriever SFB
180 servicemembers and spouses briefed.

Transition & Employment

Anyone who is looking for a job knows it's increasingly difficult — AI is screening résumés, scammers are active on LinkedIn, and the job market is tighter than ever during these uncertain economic times.

But transitioning military members, veterans and their families have extra support — Mt. Carmel's Transition and Employment (T&E) Department. In the past nine years, nearly 5,000 individuals have found jobs and a new mission thanks to the Mt. Carmel team.

Job hunting can be especially challenging for those retiring from the military. Many have never interviewed for a job or attended a networking event, much less crafted a resumé designed to pass through AI filters. Others may struggle to translate their military skills into civilian terms or simply don't know where to begin as they search for their next mission after service.

Over the past year, Director Jon Dix and his team have helped veterans discover new career paths by partnering with local companies to host hiring fairs, inviting organizations to conduct mock interviews, and creating networking opportunities for veterans, transitioning service members, adult children and military spouses.

But they don't do it alone. Partners like Dana Schron of Amentum not only participate in every job fair to find top-tier talent, but also lend their expertise through workshops, mock interviews and other forms of support.

"With Dana, it's always about how quickly she says yes," Dix said. "Our partners really do make it easier."

Another valued partner, Infinity Engineering Systems, provides essential expertise during job fairs and LINK classes, offering insights to job seekers that are hard to find anywhere else.

"Our goal is to make the process easier for veterans and transitioning military," Dix said. "Sometimes people don't even know how to apply for jobs. If someone spent 20 years in the military, they may have never had a formal interview, other than at the recruiter's office. It's a new world out there."

Transition and Employment currently has 120 partners who assist veterans in finding their next mission.

These partners contribute in a variety of ways — from small tasks like providing lunch to major contributions like teaching classes or networking with job seekers.

Translating military experience into civilian terms is essential for post-service success, not just in terms of job skills, but also language used in job searches. For employers outside the defense sector, the array of military acronyms and roles can be confusing, making it harder to understand a veteran's qualifications.

Dix relies on industry partners to attend job fairs and seek out the skills and disciplines veterans bring. He also counts on these partners to participate in networking events and mock interviews that help veterans brush up on their skills.

"Our partners in local and national businesses truly make what we do possible," he said. "We've placed so many people because of their support and are grateful for them standing up for those who stood up for our nation."

Holistic Healing

Over the past year, Mt. Carmel’s Health and Wellness Department has continued to improve and develop an overall wellness program with something for everyone.

“Being able to have all our files on a new electronic system was critical to the department’s organization,” said Kirsten Belaire, Health and Wellness Director, highlighting one of the most important accomplishments of the past year for the department.

This transition to a completely unified data system was more than just a technology update; it allowed for more streamlined support for every veteran seeking care. Another defining achievement came from the formation of fourteen new partnerships in the past year.

“These partners enhanced our ability to reach the military community by providing free and alternative therapies,” Belaire shared.

These collaborations introduced new accessible wellness pathways and strengthened Mt. Carmel’s connection within the veteran community. Among the new offerings were fly-tying workshops with Wild Warrior Adventures, spiritual wellness initiatives led by VFW Chaplain Don Spano, and yoga classes through Comeback Yoga. Another important partnership came in the form of \$35,000 in grant funding from, the Arts in Society, which provided therapeutic art classes and experiences for veterans not just in El Paso County but across much of Southern Colorado.

Each initiative offered something different. This allowed for an overall wellness program with something uniquely suited for each veteran.

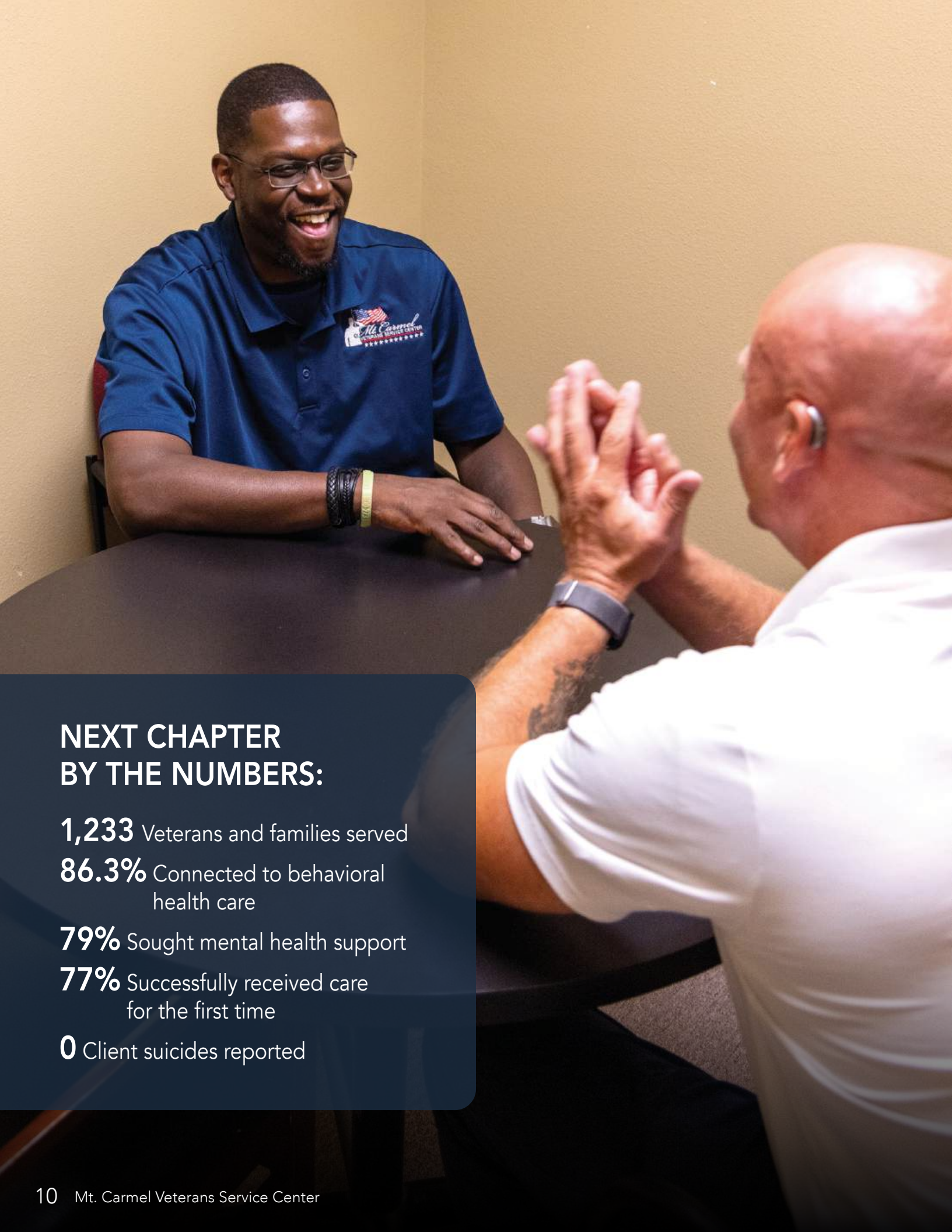
The impact of these services has been substantial on improving veterans’ lives.

At least 94% of Mt. Carmel’s clients have made progress toward their individual goals. The department, with their quick access to care and over 96% satisfaction rate, averages approximately 88 sessions each week and shows little signs of slowing down.

By mixing new infrastructure upgrades and new partnerships, Mt. Carmel elevated its wellness programming into a dynamic, veteran-centered journey.

- 4,227 Completed sessions
- 4,881 Completed session heartbeats
between April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025
- 88 Average sessions per week
- 21 Interns
- 357 Screenings
- 174 Clients received on-going services





NEXT CHAPTER BY THE NUMBERS:

1,233 Veterans and families served

86.3% Connected to behavioral health care

79% Sought mental health support

77% Successfully received care for the first time

0 Client suicides reported



Life-Saving Mission

Three years since its inception, Next Chapter remains a groundbreaking, joint initiative between Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center and UCHealth, bringing life-saving mental and behavioral health services to those in need, when they need, without the ever-increasing and all too familiar barriers to access.

The program launched in July 2022, in the wake of the Colorado Legislature’s passage of Senate Bill 21-129. This bill directed the state’s Behavioral Health Administration to assist in creating a pilot program to reduce the growing rate of suicide and suicidal ideation among the state’s veteran population by providing no-cost, stigma-free, confidential, and effective behavioral health treatment.

Next Chapter continues to stand out by pairing behavioral health experts — who are veterans themselves — with fellow veterans seeking crisis care.

“With Next Chapter, a veteran can be connected to care within a week,” as stated in a private and anonymous survey asking both clinicians and patients for feedback about the services provided by the pilot program.

In the same survey, veterans indicated it could take upwards of eight months for an appointment with the VA, despite its reported average wait time of 45 days. Whereas with Next Chapter, the waiting period is just one to two days for an initial assessment and seven days for the first appointment. That difference in timeframe alone can be crucial for patients.

INTO THE FUTURE

With the initial round of state funding concluding on June 30, 2025, the Next Chapter team is entering a new phase with a renewed focus on both sustainability and growth.

The most visual aspect so far of this next phase took place in August 2024 as Next Chapter held a ribbon cutting of its larger, standalone facility at 1110 West Moreno Ave, which is adjacent to Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center’s headquarters. Next Chapter is also developing new partnerships with Signal Behavioral Health and Rocky Mountain Health Plans, along with efforts to secure long-term funding to ensure the continued impact of this life-saving program.

Additional state funding is expected to help bolster the program after the passage of House Bill 25-1132, which earmarks funds for local nonprofits to establish or expand mental and behavioral health services to military members, veterans, and their family members.

The Next Chapter team credits the leadership of Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center as they continue to plan for and chart a bold future — expanding access, strengthening partnerships, and honoring our veterans with responsive, compassionate care.



Unwavering Support

Over the past year, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center has strengthened its role as a critical support hub for veterans, military members, and their families across the state, especially in rural areas.

2024 saw the continued expansion of Mt. Carmel's footprint in southern Colorado, with locations in Pueblo, Alamosa, Custer and Las Animas Counties.

"We remain deeply committed to saying 'yes' to every veteran who reaches out, no matter their need or situation," said Sal Katz, Jr., director of rural Colorado services for Mt. Carmel. "Our team's ability to deliver compassionate, integrated care has only grown thanks to strong collaborative partnerships, innovative programs, and a belief that no one should face life's challenges alone."

A key component to that expansion has been Mt. Carmel's partnerships with the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), United Way, the Pueblo VA, and Care & Share Food Bank. This network has allowed veterans across southern Colorado access to financial assistance, behavioral health care, employment services, and help for those facing food insecurity. Furthermore, community roundtables gave Mt. Carmel insight into the unique needs of veterans across the region, allowing for a more tailored approach in addressing their challenges.

During the past year, Mt. Carmel's southern Colorado office made meaningful progress toward securing a consolidated veteran services facility to better serve the whole region, in hopes of creating a one-stop center that simplifies access to care and enhances overall service coordination, further continuing the mission of Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center.

878 Greet and connections

264 New intakes

581 Follow-up contacts

292 Outreach engagements

8 Major events held

139 VSO referrals processed

48 MVFS cases opened

15 Next Chapter referrals

280 Volunteer hours logged

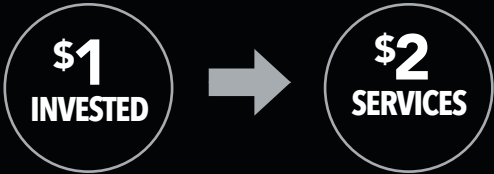
Financial Highlights

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF MARCH 31, 2025

ASSETS	
Cash	\$520,856
Accounts receivable and accrued revenue	\$398,046
Pledges receivable	\$177,893
Investments	\$975,706
Right-of-use assets	\$224,695
Property and equipment	\$184,081
Prepaid expenses	\$17,853
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,499,130
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$229,432
Lease liabilities	\$232,466
Deferred revenue	\$120,050
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$581,948
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$1,917,182
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$2,499,130



During the last fiscal year, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center invested over **\$3.2 million** into program expenses providing military-affiliated clients with **no cost/low cost** services in the Pikes Peak Region.

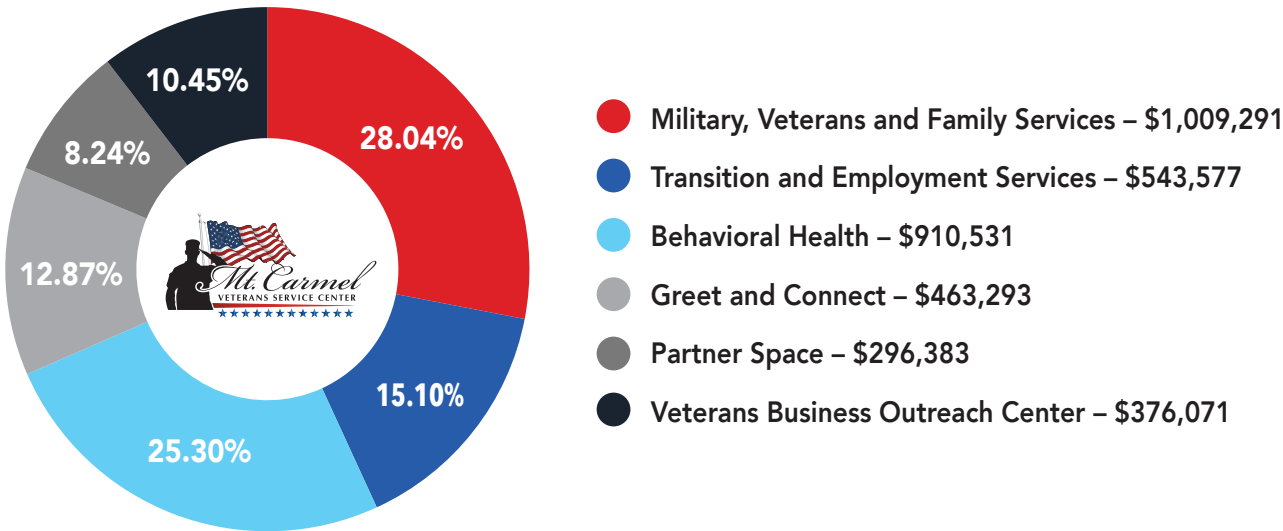


Every dollar invested in Mt. Carmel **doubles its value** in the community.

REVENUES AND EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2025

REVENUES	
Grants and contributions	\$3,934,252
Event and sponsorship income	\$362,777
Other income	\$366,347
Rental income from partners	\$56,170
TOTAL REVENUES	\$4,719,546
EXPENSES	
Program services	\$3,599,146
Fundraising	\$738,711
Management and general	\$355,392
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,693,249

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM EXPENSES



TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$3,599,146
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Source: Mt Carmel Veterans Service Center preliminary unaudited internal financial statements for the year ended March 31,2025.



The VBOC and Their Second Successful Year

Two years ago, Mt. Carmel launched Colorado's first and only Veteran Business Outreach Center (VBOC). Prior to this, Colorado veterans and their families had to travel to New Mexico for support.

Headquartered in Colorado Springs, the center provides statewide programming and consulting for transitioning service members, military spouses, and veterans. Their mission is, "to create America's next generation of veteran and military spouse small business owners."

The center is currently assisting around 700 veteran-owned businesses from different cities around Colorado. Director Joe Reagan says that their next goal is to continue that outreach and engagement in other areas of the state where there's not as many resources.

Reagan wants veterans and their families to know about all of the resources that are available to them with no out of pocket expense.

The VBOC has a variety of programs like Boots to Business for transitioning military and spouses, as well as Reboot, designed for veterans who already own businesses. Beyond classes, the center helps with developing business plans, navigating legal structures, and exploring financing options.

In addition to VBOC's internal programs, the center also partners with statewide organizations like the Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, and local chambers of commerce. These partnerships create a network of support even in remote areas of the state.

"Building these partnerships is tremendously important to make sure that we have that persistent presence," Reagan said.

Business owners may go through this process once or twice in their lives. The professionals at VBOC do this once or twice a day. So, for a business owner to have the expertise and resources provided at VBOC, it is a huge benefit.

The VBOC's impact can be seen throughout Colorado's economy. Veteran-owned businesses in our state generate roughly \$23 billion in economic activity and support nearly 96,000 jobs.

By aiding these veterans, the VBOC is strengthening Colorado communities and empowering veterans to lead businesses that uplift the state.

773 Active clients
384 New Clients
April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025
53 Workshops
505 Attendees for workshops



Expanded Outreach

Over the course of 2024, Mt. Carmel's Veterans Voice Podcast saw a major expansion of its production along with the program's reach. The podcast, which had initially been limited to only audio, now incorporates state-of-the-art video.

Under the leadership of Taylor Chapman, a 13-year Army Special Forces veteran, The Veterans Voice Podcast has seen its audience share grow to more than 55,000 listeners and is now available on multiple audio and video platforms, with YouTube having the largest following.

With a motto of "You're Not Alone" along with a continuous theme of health, wellness, and motivation, the podcast's mission remains a powerful and effective way of reaching both veterans and community members alike — wherever they are.

"Each episode is sure to leave you feeling educated, optimistic and encouraged to take your next step forward," Chapman said. "Our mission here on The Veterans Voice Podcast is to remind you all that you're not alone but furthermore, provide them with resources to ensure you never have to be."

During Chapman's tenure leading the podcast team, the show's focus has widened to highlight military-affiliated issues and initiatives on an international level, as well as how those will impact veterans and their families. The program also includes several segments spotlighting local services and events.

Among the many guests to be featured over the past year on The Veterans Voice was Benjamin Patton, son of George S. Patton IV, a decorated Vietnam War general and grandson of famed World War II General George S. Patton.

Other popular episodes included talks with Sam Westfall, who suffered a debilitating injury in the Army and recovered mentally through the sport of archery, and Nicole Weis, a professor and the University of Colorado who specializes in the psychology of PTSD. The healthcare theme also continued with Dr. Eric Abbot, a 25-year Air Force veteran and current provider with Optum healthcare, on the difficulties many service members face as they transition out of the military and into the civilian workforce.

Moving into next year, the show's primary focus will be to share the stories of our nation's heroes, as well as interviewing specialists to help continue addressing the physical and mental struggles veterans face.

The Veterans Voice publishes weekly at youtube.com/@TheVeteransVoicePodcast.



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Our mission here on The Veterans Voice Podcast is to remind you all that you're not alone but furthermore, provide them with resources to ensure you never have to be.



Volunteer Spotlight: Brooks Joseph

For the last three years, Chief Brooks Joseph has volunteered at every Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center event and currently serves as the Center's volunteer coordinator, effectively managing over 500 volunteers through clear communication and goal-based leadership.

As part of Mt. Carmel's bi-weekly food distribution events, Chief Joseph and his volunteer team have dispersed thousands of pounds of food to veterans and families, as well as non-military community members in need.

"His effectiveness and good spirit attract hundreds of volunteers, which goes a long way towards retaining Mt. Carmel's volunteer base," said James Herrington, director of development for Mt. Carmel. "His knowledge and leadership ensure that every event he participates in results in timely and efficient client service."

Chief Joseph has never stopped trying to help anyone in need. He has connected hundreds of people with the resources they need and continues to educate active-duty service members of all military branches about the numerous support programs available to them.

Not only that, but he has also selflessly committed over 1,000 volunteer hours to several other organizations across Colorado Springs, all while completing his active-duty commitment. His passion for helping others led him to create and manage his unit's volunteer program at Fort Carson. That program's success allowed him to help other units develop similar initiatives and support multiple organizations across the area. Additionally, he is a co-founder of a nonprofit called "Veteran to Veteran" that assists military members and veterans in receiving free or low-cost vehicles.

"The Chief believes that taking care of the community is the most important thing that a community member can do. He has identified problems and worked to improve those areas. We're extremely fortunate to have him on our team," Bob McLaughlin, executive director of Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, said.

Thank you, Chief Joseph, for setting the standard for how we support our community and for embodying the true spirit of service.

Beacon Supporter: Whataburger



In the short few years after the first Whataburger opened its doors in Colorado Springs, the iconic Texas-based burger chain has become a consummate beacon of support for Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center.

"Getting to know Mt. Carmel and everyone involved, they're a special organization," said William Tamminga, owner of Burgerworks, the franchise operator of the eight Whataburger locations across Colorado. "They make it happen; you can see the work they accomplish; you can see the work they do, and the positive impact they make on veterans in the area."

Signage is prominently displayed in dining rooms and along drive-thru lanes of Whataburger's locations to help bring awareness to Mt Carmel Veterans Service Center and the services provided to military members, veterans, and their families.

"It adds to our connection to the community," added Armando Alvarez, president of Burgerworks.

Whataburger has also provided several donations to Mt. Carmel stemming from several customer promotions. This has included a box of pancake mix donated to Mt. Carmel for every 32-ounce milkshake purchased. So far, 1 pallet of pancake mix (roughly 500 boxes) was delivered to Mt. Carmel's food pantry, with more in the future. Mt. Carmel also benefited from \$7,734 in monetary donations, which stemmed from a portion of iced coffee and milkshake sales.



"It's always fun to get the customers, and as much of the community as we can, involved in these promotions," Tamminga said. "Whether we're the conduit for customers to learn about Mt. Carmel or they come back in a different way, it's important that the community and veterans know about the work Mt. Carmel does."

In conjunction with the opening of the region's ninth location in Fountain, 100 custom camouflage caps with Mt. Carmel's logo embroidered in Whataburger's iconic orange color will be for sale, with 100% of the proceeds going toward Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center.

"As Whataburger has expanded its locations throughout Colorado this past year, their support of veterans and partnership with Mt. Carmel have also grown," said Bob McLaughlin, executive director of Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center. "Their commitment to making a difference has been a game changer to our ability to provide a hand up to those in need throughout the Front Range and in Southern Colorado."

Partnership Perfected

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center’s founder, Jay Cimino, always emphasized the importance of relationships in business, whether it was selling cars or providing support for the community. His mission to champion others lives on through the partnerships Mt. Carmel has cultivated over the years, ensuring program effectiveness for those who served our great nation.

One of the Center’s most steadfast partners over the past five years has been Medicare Mentors, LLC. Medicare Mentors was established by Rich and Pam Behrendt-Lewis in 2017 to provide relationship-based education and services so that every Medicare-eligible person understands the process, as well as all their individual options to optimize coverage and benefits. This is done at no cost to the client.

“I’ve been working in the Medicare space, and I always felt like I had more of a relationship with my clients, but it wasn’t just about me being their insurance agent. I would take clients with me to drive Meals on Wheels or just do a little art project,” said Pam Behrendt-Lewis. “Fast-forward about 10 years, Rich and I now have a business that can still do those things.”

Each year, Medicare Mentor’s team of over 50 navigators guides thousands of people through the often-bureaucratic maze of Medicare eligibility and coverage options.

“The unique partnership shared by Medicare Mentors and Mt. Carmel began with a simple handshake between Rich Lewis and I, and our shared vision of providing a hand up to those who served,” said Bob McLaughlin, executive director of Mt. Carmel.

The Medicare Mentors team has a unique passion for serving the veteran community, as their staff is comprised of several military retirees, veterans and military spouses. That unique background allows their team members to fully understand how Medicare coverage can be used in conjunction with TRICARE, VA, CHAMPVA, and Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB).

“Medicare Mentors has partnered with Mt. Carmel in support of our military and veteran community for over five years. Everyone on their staff is a veteran and understands the challenges faced by many of our senior veterans planning their post-retirement healthcare,” McLaughlin said.

The support that Medicare Mentors provides to Mt. Carmel reaches far beyond Medicare navigation and advocacy and has become much more of a crucial part of the day-to-day operations of Mt. Carmel.

“The relationship evolved from having a part-time info table in our lobby to now having a full-time on-site operational office in the Mt. Carmel facility. Additionally, Medicare Mentors has been an enduring sponsor of our major fundraisers as well as being frequent volunteers at our numerous outreach events,” McLaughlin noted.

Medicare Mentors has been a beacon of support, often times helping with Mt. Carmel events throughout the community.

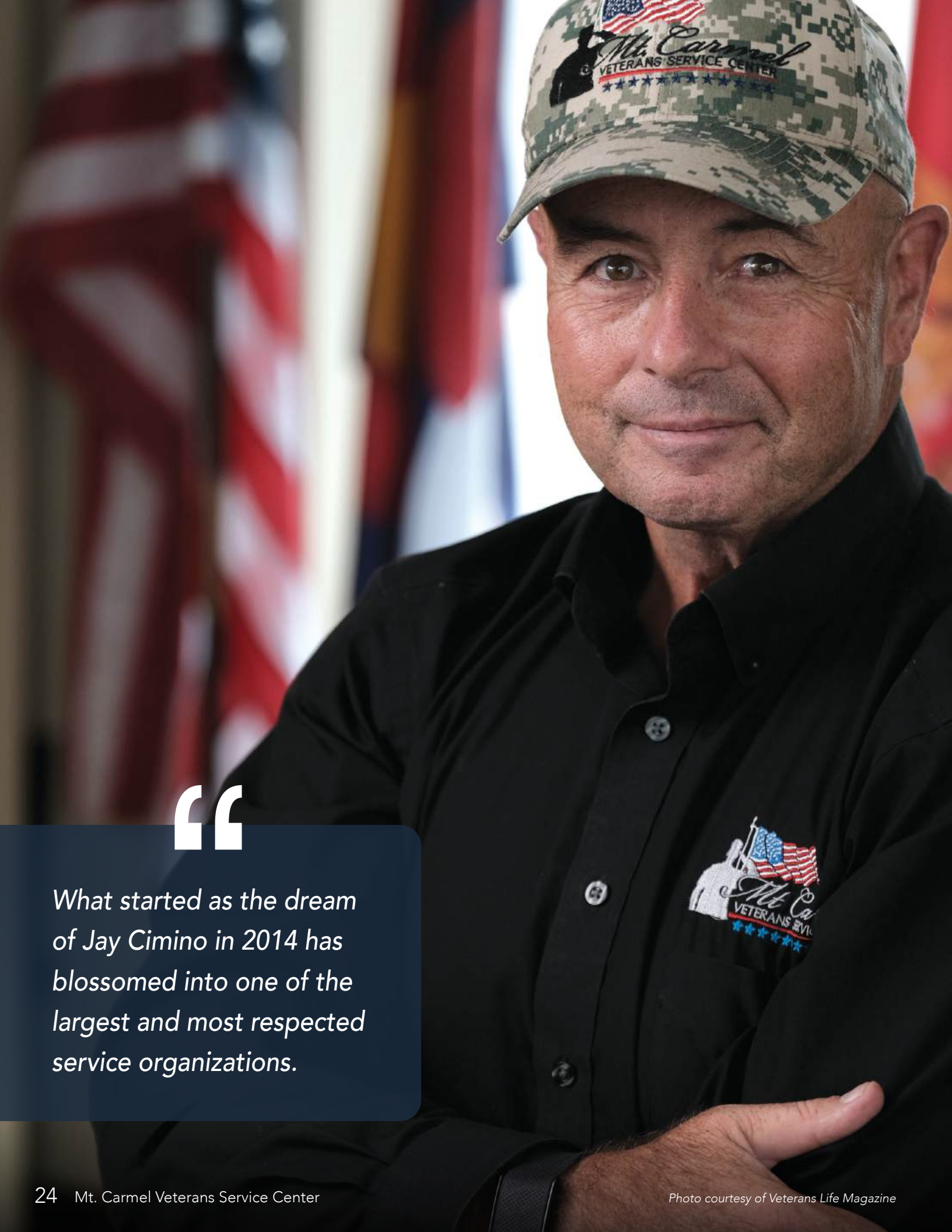


“I knew that our business was much more than just helping people with Medicare,” Rich Lewis explained. “It was connecting people to services that they needed to be able to have a good fulfilling life. What we found in Mt. Carmel was that same idea of having this culture of connecting and making sure people were getting the services that they needed without having to hunt for them themselves or go all over to town. Our cultures really match,” Lewis explained.

With the partnership between Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center and Medicare Mentors being one of the first and longest lasting partnerships, not only have they provided stability to Mt. Carmel’s client base — but also helped to develop the blueprint for subsequent partnerships added into Mt. Carmel’s hub-and-spoke approach, which has proven wildly successful.

“Medicare Mentors sets the standard for this essential collaboration. Without such tremendous partners, our continued mission success and program expansion would not be possible,” McLaughlin said.

Partners like Medicare Mentors allow Mt. Carmel to remain a one-stop shop for comprehensive services that improve and enrich lives, and guarantee that all donor funds are used in the most appropriate and efficient way possible to support service members, veterans, and their families.



“

What started as the dream of Jay Cimino in 2014 has blossomed into one of the largest and most respected service organizations.



Looking Ahead

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center is preparing to celebrate its tenth anniversary of providing life improving services and support to military members, service members, and veterans. What started as the dream of Jay Cimino in 2014 has blossomed into one of the largest and most respected service organizations — not just in Colorado Springs — but across the state of Colorado.

As Mt. Carmel embarks upon its second decade, the mission is just as critical as ever. Mt. Carmel's leadership plans to continue growth in areas focused on health and wellness. The need for such assistance has seen an exponential increase in the past five years and it is projected to continue that same trajectory into the future.

To meet these needs, plans are being developed to provide more access to existing health and wellness programs along with adding new clinicians to meet the growing need. The door at Mt. Carmel is always open for new avenues of health, wellness and supportive services to continue to meet the individualized needs of any veteran, service member, or family member that crosses our threshold.

Mt. Carmel has also continued to find new partners providing myriad services, fulfilling Jay Cimino's dream of providing a one-stop shop for wrap-around care. Among the partnerships providing a new service at Mt. Carmel is **FreeWill**, a leading online estate planning platform, providing much needed estate planning services for veterans, service members, or family members at all levels of the financial ladder.

"With FreeWill's free, user-friendly tools, donors can create a legally valid will or update your existing one in just 20 minutes — all while supporting the mission and programs helping Veterans, Military and their families at Mt. Carmel. Whether it's through a bequest, charitable gift annuity, or other planned gift, your legacy can help ensure a brighter future for our community," explained Bob McLaughlin, executive director of Mt. Carmel.

The upcoming year will also see Mt. Carmel partner with the **Pikes Peak Community Foundation** to establish a Mt. Carmel endowment.

"The Pikes Peak Community Foundation proudly stewards an endowment to ensure Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center remains a trusted resource for our military, veterans and their families forever," said Margaret Dolan, CEO of the Pikes Peak Community Foundation.

This will provide the avenue formembers of our community to leave a lasting legacy in support of veterans through Mt. Carmel services, truly ensuring that none of our brothers or sisters in arms are left behind.

A CHAMPION

*A champion is not perfect, but an ordinary person
who inspires others to be the best they can be.*

A champion is one who puts others first in the journey to win.

*A champion prioritizes vision and passion and
connects with people to lead fairly by treating everyone
with respect and with a clear set of objectives.*

— Jay Cimino



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